

Bavaria: More than Just Oktoberfest

Bayern: Mehr als nur Oktoberfest

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

Sabrina Hernandez

Thesis Advisor

Dr. Laura Šešet

**Ball State University
Muncie, IN**

November 2017

Expected Date of Graduation

December 2017

Abstract

In this paper I discuss several aspects of Munich and Bavaria. The city is a central hub for the region that has its own unique history, language, and cultural aspects. The history of the city's founding is quite interesting and also has ties to the history of the German nation. The language spoken in Bavaria is specific to the region and there are several colloquialisms that are only used in Germany's southernmost region. The location of the city is also an important topic discussed in the paper as well.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Laura Sestet for advising me throughout this process. Her help and support throughout the process was more than I could have asked for in a thesis advisor. Her encouragement to go on this trip was something that drew me to these unique experiences that I would not have had, had I not decided to go on this trip. I would also like to thank her for helping me improve my German writing abilities, which was incredibly helpful during my time abroad. Vielen Dank Frau Sestet, ohne Ihnen hätte ich dass nicht geschafft!

I would also like to thank my parents for encouraging me throughout all four years here at Ball State and for providing me with the opportunity to study abroad. Without their support and encouragement this would have been an impossible task.

I would also like to thank Monica for being a constant in my life at school. She was always there when I needed someone to talk to even when she was in Spain and I was in Germany.

Process Analysis

The process for completing my thesis took several months after I submitted my proposal for the paper. My preparation for taking this on began even before I actually had my experiences abroad.

In order to begin preparing to take on this thesis, I first had to apply for and get accepted into the KIIS Munich study abroad program for the summer of 2017. Once accepted I had to attend the mandatory orientation session and prepare all the necessary documents and travel supplies necessary for the trip.

After all the pre-trip preparations were completed, the next step was to go to Germany, take the class I had signed up for, and learn as much as possible from both my experiences and my classwork. The class I was enrolled in was titled "Experiencing German Abroad: The Cultural History of Munich." During my time in Germany I took notes on the different things that I experienced, I kept projects that I completed for the class, and I immersed myself in the language and culture of the city.

Following my time in Germany, I compiled everything I completed while abroad in a folder so that I could begin the actual writing process. I met with my thesis advisor Dr. Sestet to develop a plan and an outline to follow throughout the writing process. I reread my textbook from the course in order to more familiarize myself with the information that I wanted to discuss within the paper and I did online research into the Bavarian dialect so that I had more information on the nuances of the language.

Finally, throughout the writing process I emailed my progress to my advisor in order to get continual feedback on where I was in the process and in what direction my paper was going. I used the feedback that was provided me to further refine and polish the work that I had already completed.

During the summer of 2017, I studied abroad in Munich, Germany. During that time, I was able to stay with a host family and take a course entitled “Experiencing German Abroad: The Cultural History of Munich”. Although I had been to Germany previously, my experiences on this trip broadened my ideas about the German culture and its people. I was able to discover a new area of the country and rediscover some of my favorite places abroad. These new experiences allow me to showcase the rich cultural history in the city of Munich and the Bavarian region. The personal knowledge I gained while in Munich and Germany’s southern region, along with additional research, has given me an irreplaceable knowledge skill set that will help me to not only finish out my degree, but to continue my educational journey into graduate school. The purpose of this project is to highlight the unique cultural history of Munich and Bavaria through personal exploration of castles, museums, and historical centers throughout Bavaria.

History

Munich is a dynamic and independent city within Germany’s largest southern state Bavaria. The city’s history and development are quite unique. During the 12th century, the salt trade was very prominent in Europe. It was so prominent that Duke Heinrich der Löwe wanted to create his own market to sell it, so that he would not have to pay the bridge toll through the market owned by Bishop Otto von Freising. An argument arose between the two men, leading Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa to intervene. He decided that Heinrich could keep his market but one-third of his earnings would have to be given to the bishop as compensation. In the market started by Duke Heinrich der Löwe, Munich found its origin and one of its most famous city centers was created: the Marienplatz. Over the years, Marienplatz has been a center for the city, which rapidly began to change after the establishment of the market.

With the market at its center, the city began to expand. When walking through the city today, remnants of the old city walls can still be seen as rings that represent the city's growth and development through the years much like the concentric rings of a tree. Although the walls themselves have been removed, an aerial view of the city still shows where they once stood. The second wall around the city included five gates, which are the Karlstor (Neuhauser Tor), the Sendlinger Tor, Isartor, Schwabinger Tor, and the Angertor. Four of these gates (Karlstor, Sendlinger Tor, Isartor, and Schwabinger Tor) divide the city into four quarters. The quarters are the Kreuzviertel, the Hackenviertel, the Angerviertel, and the Graggenauer Viertel. Several of the city's iconic and historical landmarks lie within the four quarters at the city center. Within the Graggenauer Viertel is the Münchner Residenz, which was the seat of power in Munich. The Kreuzviertel is home to the Frauenkirche, a prominent symbol of the city. The Angerviertel houses the alte Peter, the oldest church in Munich.

The Münchner Residenz was built in 1385 for the Wittelsbach family. The Wittelsbach family ruled in Bavaria from 1180 to 1918. From 1508 to 1918 the Residenz served as the seat of power for the Wittelsbachers and also served as their family home. The Wittelsbachers lived in the Residenz as dukes, elector princes, and, finally, kings. As the years passed each ruling Wittelsbacher added on to the Residenz, making it one of the largest structures in the city.

Several of the Wittelsbacher lived their lives in the Residenz, but the first king to live there was König Max I. Joseph. He was a king beloved by the people that he ruled. He was so loved that the people named him "Vater Max," or Father Max. König Max I. Joseph was so beloved by the people, because he helped create the first constitution for his kingdom in 1818, which outlined the rights of the people, and created a parliament to help govern the people. As a king he did everything in his power to serve his people. Upon Max I. Joseph's death in 1825, his

son Kronprinz (crown-prince) Ludwig became König Ludwig I. He had an image for the city that he wanted to create. He wanted the city to be elegant and he also wanted the city to resemble Athens. In order to accomplish these goals, he had an elegant street constructed that became known as Ludwigstrasse, which stretches from the Odeonsplatz to the Siegestor. This street was built for the court and the wealthy citizens. On the Königsplatz he also commissioned that the Propyläen be built with Greek architecture in mind. The Propyläen was built as an entrance to the plaza. Although Ludwig I did a lot for the city in terms of construction, he was less loved by the people than his father because of his mistress, Lola Montez, who the people thought had too much influence over the king. By 1848, König Ludwig I abdicated his throne because the protests of Lola Montez became so intense and led to a revolution in the city.

During the revolution, Ludwig's son Maximilian became the king. Like his father he helped further construction in the city; however, he also helped further the industrialization of the city. He promoted the sciences, technology, and education in the city by taking leading scientists from the university and establishing a technical school. Because of all that König Maximilian II was able to do in these areas, the industrialization of Bavaria was greatly advanced. König Maximilian ruled Bavaria until his death in 1864. After Maximilian, two other Wittelsbachers served Bavaria as rulers, König Ludwig II and Prinzregent Luitpold, until the monarchy fell in 1918.

The city holds great significance in the southern region of Germany, but it also holds greater significance for the country as a whole. This can be seen most readily during the years leading up to World War II. Many people do not know that much of Adolf Hitler's rise to power occurred in Munich. Hitler was a member of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei (NSDAP) or the Nazi Party which was established in Munich in the 1920s. The party sought to

use the people's dissatisfaction with the government to its own advantage. In December of 1923 shortly after Hitler had tried to overthrow the government in Munich and give himself power, he led a march through the city. This march, known as the Hitlerputsch, was stopped by the city's police at the Münchner Odeonsplatz in front of the Feldherrnhalle. Twenty people died in this struggle, fifteen of which were followers of Hitler. After the march was stopped by the police, the party was banned, but after two years they were able to reestablish themselves as a political party. With the new founding, the party gained more support and grew into the larger more powerful Nazi Party that pushed its agenda into an even stronger countrywide policy. The Hitlerputsch played a very critical role in the national socialist's rise to power. Hitler rose to power as Reichskanzler in 1933. In 1935 Hitler organized another march in the city; this time to the Königsplatz where he wanted to lay his fifteen followers, those who had died in the Hitlerputsch, to rest. Because of the many events that occurred in the city and Hitler's ties to Munich, the city became known as the Hauptstadt der Bewegung, or the Capital of the Movement, despite the fact that Berlin was still the official seat of power in the country.

Although this was a difficult time for the nation as a whole, Munich did play a significant role in the events that gave rise to Hitler's power. The city became very closely related to this particular era in German history; however, the city has continued to rebuild and reemerge with a focus on positive change since its destruction at the end of the war.

Language

German, like many other languages has several variations. There is the proper language that is taught to language learners, known as Hochdeutsch (High German), but there are also several dialects that are location specific, depending on the region in which one finds one's self.

With Munich being in Bavaria, it is a city known for having a very strong dialect: Bayerisch. What is a dialect? A dialect is “a regional variety of language distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties and constituting together with them a single language” (Merriam-Webster 2017). High German follows all of the language constructs one would want to see in formal writing and speaking, whereas Bayerisch has its own unique characteristics that make it distinguishable from other dialects throughout the country. This was a culture shock for me in many ways. Because I grew up in a home with a native speaker, and am a near-native German speaker myself, I thought that I had a grasp on the German language. However while on this study abroad program, I learned that I have a much better grasp on my mother’s dialect than on the High German that the other students had on the trip.

This variation in the Bavaria dialect is considered to be culturally significant to the region because Bavarians take such great pride in their dialect. Oftentimes when I would encounter people, they would ask me if I was able to understand their Bayerisch or if it was too difficult. I found that while I understood most things, there were some idiosyncrasies when compared to the German dialect I had learned as a child and the German that I was experiencing as an adult. An example of this difference occurred when I was talking to my host mom about what foods I liked to eat. She asked me if I ate “Semmel” (the bread from the bakery) and pointed to a bakery bag on the table. Semmel was a new word for me because the term that I had learned for the small rolls from the bakery was “Brötchen.” Although this was somewhat of a challenge for me, I tried to embrace and practice as much of the Bavarian dialect as possible during my short time in Munich.

Much like the southern United States has very different dialects compared to the Midwestern or northern United States, Germany's largest southern region has phrases and words that are quite unique to Bavaria. Two of the most distinct are the conventional greetings in the south—"Servus" and "Grüss Gott." Neither of these greetings would be considered conventional in the northern regions of Germany. As one of my professors stated: "If you were to go to Hamburg and greet someone with those, people will look at you like you are crazy." However, the same applies in Bavaria, simply saying "Hallo" is usually a sign that the person is a foreigner. Another phrase that is characterized by its uniqueness to Bavaria is "pfirti." It is a phrase that is sporadically used throughout the region to say to say good bye to someone. "Pfirti" is quite unique in that even when in Munich it might not be something that every person will hear or come across. Like the other phrases mentioned earlier, it is a distinctly Bavaria salutation. This is another phrase that is fairly isolated to Bavaria and would not be considered conventional throughout the other regions of the country. Although I understand that each dialect has its own nuances, it was incredibly interesting to actually experience it than simply being told about it in a classroom setting.

Location

Munich's location within Germany and within Bavaria also has a great deal of significance. As discussed previously, the salt trade specifically and commerce generally are what prompted the formation of a new market; but the location was chosen due to the nearby Isar River and a crossroad. Heinrich der Löwe wanted effective access to his market and both the established road and the Isar provided this with ease. People could come by land or by water to his market.

Throughout the city there are several well-known symbols. One of the most iconic is the Frauenkirche, a church that was built with the hopes of turning the city into a bishop's city, which came to fruition almost 100 years later. The architect of the Frauenkirche was Jorg von Halspach. Construction of the Frauenkirche began in 1468. By 1488 the church was almost complete; the only things missing were the tower cap domes. The build was officially completed almost 40 years later when the domes were placed on the towers. The Frauenkirche continued to serve as symbol of the city even after the devastation and throughout reconstruction of the city following World War II.

Another symbol of the city is the Marienplatz. Much like during the time of Munich's founding, the Marienplatz now serves as the city center. Within the square there are several train stops for both the S Bahn and the U Bahn (underground train network). The Marienplatz is the heart of the pedestrian zone in the city and is an important social and political center. The Rathaus, or town hall, is also located on the square. The Rathaus represents the seat of the current government in Bavaria. The Rathaus been located on the Marienplatz since the 14th century, when the original, or Altes Rathaus, was built. In 1874 the new Rathaus was built on the plaza just around the corner from the original Rathaus. Along with the Rathaus there are several shops and restaurants located on the square making it a central hub for tourists and Münchners alike. Also located in the Marienplatz is the Mariensaule, which is the plaza's namesake. The Mariensaule is a pole in the center of the plaza with a depiction of Mary at the top.

Although not a symbol of the city itself, Schloss Neuschwanstein is another iconic symbol often associated with the Bavarian region. King Ludwig II, a Wittelsbacher, built several castles throughout Bavaria; however, Neuschwanstein is probably the most iconic of these. The castle was built between 1869 and 1886; however, the castle was never fully completed due to

King Ludwig's sudden death in the middle of construction. The finished areas of the castle include the throne room, the king's apartment, the chapel room, and the winter garden and grotto. There are several unique qualities about this castle that make it different from many of the other castles built by King Ludwig. Several of the rooms in Neuschwanstein depict several images from Richard Wagner's operas. Neuschwanstein also had running water capabilities in the kitchens and bathrooms, unlike many other castles built in the area.

Along with the symbols of Munich there are many traditions that are unique to the city, and have been attributed to the region as a whole. The two biggest Munich traditions are the Oktoberfest and Biergartens. At its origin, the first Oktoberfest on October 12, 1810 was a celebration of marriage between crown prince Ludwig von Bayern and Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen. At this celebration the people of the city organized a horse race for the royal couple. Because everyone had enjoyed the festivities so much, a year later another horse race was held, but this time there was also an organized agricultural festival for the people to attend. The festival was held on the same lawn as the wedding and it was renamed the Theresens-Wiese in honor of the bride. Eventually it was renamed the Theresienwiese by the people, but now most locals refer to it as "die Wiesn." As time has passed, the festival has developed into the world wide phenomenon of Oktoberfest, where people come together to celebrate, see shows, and visit as many beer tents as they can. Still today the Oktoberfest is a large part of the cities culture.

Oktoberfest is one place at which people enjoy the beer that is brewed in and around the city. Another place where locals and foreigners alike can enjoy beer in the city is at the various Biergartens. Much like the Oktoberfest, Biergartens began with a functional purpose and have evolved into a wonderful representation of the city. First came the beer served in the Biergartens. The Augustiner monks began brewing beer in Munich during the Middle Ages and for almost

700 years they did this out of their own brewery. In 1487 the duke ordered that beer brewed in Munich was only to be brewed with hops, barley, and water. This became known as the Reinheitsgebot and was extended to include all of Bavaria in 1516. By the 19th century Munich gained the title of beer city because there were more than 50 breweries operating in the city. On the property of all the breweries were cellars where the beer was stored with ice. On the ground above the cellars, gardens were planted with chestnuts trees. While the cellars served as a storage center for the beer, the gardens above served as a location for the breweries to have guests and serve beer. And so, the Biergarten was established and has now become a phenomenon that people want to experience.

Competence

Studying abroad in Munich to complete my German minor was an irreplaceable experience to include in my undergraduate experience. I was able to take my knowledge of spoken German and my education in written German and apply them in a new and different setting than I had ever experienced before. Having the ability to visit the historical places discussed in class and actually experiencing them myself, was an incredible experience and is something that I believe everyone should be able to have. It made the lessons in the classroom more personal and engaging. Although I only spent six weeks learning about these places and experiencing everything the city of Munich has to offer, I walked away with a lifetime of knowledge. I was able take all that I had learned during my time in German classes at Ball State and apply those skills to conversation in an entirely new setting and to writing in new contexts. I believe that my German writing improved greatly and my comfort level for speaking in an area with a different dialect grew as well.

Munich is a city that is a mixture of old and new; these elements come together to create an entirely unique cityscape and atmosphere. There are so many opportunities for tourists and the city natives throughout the city. Over the course of my time in the city, I learned that Munich is not only a prime destination for tourists visiting Germany; it is central hub of life and work for Germans and other Europeans alike. Munich also serves as a crossroads to several other major European cities and countries with easy transportation access throughout. There is easy travel to Italy, Croatia, Austria, Switzerland, and the Czech Republic. I think that visiting a city as culturally unique as Munich is an experience that can enhance anyone's college experience and in particular those studying German education. The city serves as a jumping off point for other uniquely European adventures.

Sources

Bauereiß, M., Dietz, U., & Schumann-Jung, B. (2010). *Typisch München! Stadtgeschichte und Geschichten*. München: Museums-Pädagogisches Zentrum.

Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. (2017). Dialect. Retrieved October 01, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dialect>